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ON PAGE *A-6*

NEW YORK TIMES  
1 APRIL 1977

J L L

# Ruby Introduced Oswald as C.I.A. Agent,

## Woman Tells House Inquiry

WASHINGTON, March 31 (AP)—Investigators of the House Assassinations Committee told committee members in a secret briefing this month that a woman who worked in a Dallas nightclub before President Kennedy was assassinated was willing to testify that Jack Ruby introduced Lee Harvey Oswald to her and to others as "Lee Harvey Oswald of the C.I.A."

Mr. Ruby, a Dallas nightclub owner, killed Mr. Oswald after the Kennedy assassination. The Warren Commission concluded that Mr. Ruby did not know Mr. Oswald before the assassination, and Mr. Ruby maintained he had not previously known Mr. Oswald.

A 20-page section of the secret March 17 briefing was accidentally released by the committee yesterday, a day after the House voted to give the panel two years to pursue its investigations of the killings of President Kennedy and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

### Doubt on Warren Commission

The investigators also said the possibility that there were too many bullet fragments for Mr. Oswald to have killed Kennedy alone had been raised because of the story of a nurse. She was identified as the head nurse at Parkland Hospital in Dallas. Investigators quoted her as saying four or five bullet fragments, not one

clean bullet, were removed from John B. Connally, then Governor of Texas, who was wounded when Mr. Kennedy was killed.

If that is true, the investigators said, the Warren Commission's conclusion that one bullet went through President Kennedy's body and then traveled on to wound Mr. Connally might no longer be valid.

Robert Tannenbaum, the committee's chief investigator of the Kennedy assassination, told the committee: "If the four or five fragments in fact were taken out and if we can show—if we can locate them—that they weigh more than that portion that is missing from that bullet, then the very cornerstone and basis of the entire Warren Commission report is no longer valid."

The commission, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, concluded that Mr. Oswald was acting alone in killing President Kennedy and was not part of a conspiracy.

Mr. Tannenbaum told the committee that he considered the bullet theory and the former nightclub worker's story "very significant." He said the woman was prepared to testify on Mr. Ruby's reference to Mr. Oswald as being from the Central Intelligence Agency.

Further, Mr. Tannenbaum said, the same woman is prepared to testify that she was taking pictures at Dealey Plaza

when Mr. Kennedy was killed there and that two men identifying themselves as C.I.A. and Federal Bureau of Investigation agents took the film from her two days later. Mr. Tannenbaum quoted her as saying her camera angle would show parts of the controversial grassy knoll. He added "that could be crucial."

One conspiracy theory that has never been proved was that shots were fired from a gun on the grassy knoll at the same time Oswald was firing from the Texas schoolbook depository building.

### Suicide Time Pinpointed

PALM BEACH, Fla., March 31 (AP)—A tape recorder being used to transcribe a television program recorded the gunshot when a friend of Lee Harvey Oswald killed himself, the authorities say.

Lieut. Richard Sheets of the Palm Beach County sheriff's office said there were no sounds of anyone else in the background as George de Mohrenschildt died.

Mr. Sheets said that by comparing the tape with television station logs the investigators determined that Mr. de Mohrenschildt, 65, shot himself at 15 seconds past 2:21 P.M. Tuesday. Mr. Sheets said the autopsy, which concluded Mr. de Mohrenschildt committed suicide, would be reviewed before the case was closed. But he indicated he thought the death was a suicide.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt, a Dallas geologist, apparently shot himself after an investigator for the House Assassinations Committee tried to interview him, the officials said. Mr. de Mohrenschildt had known Lee Harvey Oswald and his wife, Marina.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt was a psychiatric patient at the Parkland Hospital in Dallas for 51 days late last year after a suicide attempt, according to a United Press International report today.

Did this allegation  
surface on the Warren  
Commission inquiry? — NO —

Russ identify it

Scott Russ  
Can't find any  
reference to it

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Mr. J L L  
Thank  
you

**Jack Anderson and Les Whitten**

# Questions Remain in King Probe

Nine years ago, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., spiritual leader of the civil rights movement, was gunned down in Memphis. An escaped convict, James Earl Ray, was nailed for the murder.

Yet nagging suspicions persisted that he may have been hired by others. The public doubt finally forced a Justice Department task force to review the case. It has now concluded that Ray "was the assassin and that he acted alone."

House investigators, however, have challenged the Justice Department's findings. In a confidential, 16-page analysis, they have pointed out significant inconsistencies and omissions in the task force report.

They note that the task force had a "multitude of leads" to pursue yet interviewed only 30 people. "Thirty interviews could hardly scratch the surface," declares the analysis. "A detective investigating a common street crime may very likely conduct more interviews."

The House investigators don't pretend that they have solved the case. But they have set forth their clues in a fascinating secret report, stamped "Sensitive." Here are the highlights in chronological order:

- While Ray was serving time in the Missouri state penitentiary, he told cellmates that he would kill King "if the price was right." Ray also was quoted as saying he intended to seek out a "businessmen's association" which allegedly had offered \$100,000 for King's murder.

- On April 23, 1967, Ray escaped from the prison by hiding in a large bread box, which was loaded on a bak-

ery truck. The congressional investigators are trying to find out whether anyone aided Ray in his escape and whether this assistance was "connected" to the King assassination.

- The escapee had ~~known~~ access to false identities. He passed himself off as Eric Galt, Ramon George Sneyd, Paul Bridgman and John Willard. "These aliases changed the names of real men, all of whom lived close to one another in suburban Toronto," report the investigators. "In addition, three out of the four bear physical resemblances to Ray." Galt "even had scars in the same location as did Ray, the forehead and right palm." The House sleuths want to know "whether Ray received any help in obtaining these aliases."

- For the next year, Ray "traveled across the United States, lived in more than a dozen cities and traveled in four foreign countries. . . A conservative estimate of his total expenses would be at least \$7,000. Ray himself estimates that he spent at least \$9,500." Those who did business with him recall that "he often paid for items with new \$20 bills." The House Assassinations Committee "intends to investigate the sources of Ray's funds in general and of those \$20 bills in particular."

- The committee has received unverified reports that Ray was in touch with the Beverly Hills office of Litton Industries in California. While he was posing as Eric Galt, he also listed as his previous employer a Passagoula, Miss., shipbuilding company owned by Litton Industries. The investigators are checking "whether there is any rela-

tionship between Ray and Litton Industries."

- The late William Sartor, a journalist, alleged that organized crime figures had accepted a \$300,000 contract on King's life from a right-wing racist group. According to Sartor, Ray got in touch with these men in New Orleans. The committee is seeking "all evidentiary material that might support or refute Mr. Sartor's report."

- A witness has told investigators that he overheard a telephone conversation on the afternoon of the King assassination. "Frank Liberto, a person with alleged organized crime connections, said: 'Shoot the bastard. Do it this afternoon. Shoot him, even if you have to do it on the balcony, just do it.'"

- The committee has received "independent corroboration" of a possible Liberto link. A witness told of a Birmingham, Ala., gunshop owner who, before the assassination, pointed to a rifle and said: "This is the gun that is going to kill Martin Luther King." Later the witness saw the gunshop owner "in the company of Ray and Liberto." The secret report describes Liberto as "a target of the committee's investigation."

- Ray fled to Toronto after the assassination. He applied for Canadian birth certificates under the names of Paul Bridgman and Ramon George Sneyd. He finally obtained a birth certificate and passport in Sneyd's name. The House investigators are checking "the procedures used by Ray in securing these documents." They want to know whether he could have obtained them "without the assistance of some presently unidentified person or persons."

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JLL -  
Never  
heard of  
him.

## Chicago Gangland Slaying

CHICAGO—A gangland enforcer described by sources as a key man in a Central Intelligence Agency-crime syndicate plot to kill Cuban President Fidel Castro died Wednesday—the victim of a mob assassination.

Charles Nicoletti, 60, of Melrose Park, once capo of Chicago mob hit men, was pulled from his burning car in the parking lot of a suburban restaurant Tuesday night after being shot three times in the head.

Sources said Nicoletti, onetime right-hand man to slain mob boss Sam Giancana and once considered the successor to the top spot in the Chicago mob, had been responsible for drawing up CIA-ordered plans for the assassination of Castro. They also said he broke with the mob following Giancana's death because he felt the CIA "was taking over the operation."

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JLL

## Dutch Journalist to Testify On Role of Oswald Friend

By Jeremiah O'Leary  
Washington Star Staff Writer

More details of the late George de Mohrenschildt's connection with Lee Harvey Oswald and the murder of President John F. Kennedy will be given to the House Assassinations Committee today by a witness close to the Russian-born Dallas professor.

Willem Oltmans, a Dutch journalist who had cultivated de Mohrenschildt for a decade after the death of Kennedy, is scheduled to make a second appearance before committee probers today. He was interviewed here last month by the Kennedy task force of the committee after de Mohrenschildt disappeared in Brussels while the two were in Europe attempting to arrange publication of a book written about the Kennedy case by the 65-year-old teacher.

De Mohrenschildt committed suicide Tuesday in Palm Beach, Fla., while House investigators were trying to contact him for questioning on what he knew about Oswald and the 1963 slaying of Kennedy.

Oltmans told The Washington Star he can now give the committee new details of what de Mohrenschildt told him about his connection with Oswald and Oswald's Russian wife Marina. The Oswalds and de Mohrenschildt were friends in the Russian-speaking community of Dallas, but the Warren Commission had concluded de Mohrenschildt had no connection with Kennedy's death.

**THE MANUSCRIPT** of de Mohrenschildt's book, reportedly in the custody of de Mohrenschildt's Dallas lawyer, Pat S. Russell, is said to name CIA and FBI agents involved in the assassination and to spell out de Mohrenschildt's claim that he was responsible for Oswald's behavior.

In the meantime, it was learned today from reliable sources that de Mohrenschildt tried to commit suicide four times in 1976 both with drug overdoses and by slashing his wrists. These attempts resulted in his being committed for mental care to Parkland Hospital in Dallas last fall. It was at Parkland that Kennedy was pronounced dead after he was shot in a Dallas motorcade more than 13 years ago. Shot by nightclub owner Jack Ruby in the Dallas police headquarters building, Oswald died there two days after Kennedy.

Meanwhile, Chairman Louis Stokes of the House Assassinations Committee has taken personal charge of the 65-person staff during what he says is a period of reorganization after the traumatic internal struggles that nearly destroyed the panel.

Stokes, D-Ohio, yesterday spent two hours at staff headquarters in the dingy former FBI fingerprint building, first addressing the committee employees and then touring their working area.

**THE MEETING WAS** closed to the press, but reporters heard Stokes receive several ovations in the 30-minute period. Later, Stokes said he told the staff, now stripped of its guiding spirit, former Chief Counsel Richard A. Sprague, how proud he was of them and that he hoped all of them would remain on the job during the reorganization period.

Stokes said the committee is now looking for a new chief counsel of top caliber and he added, "We'll look for the best." He did not rule out the possibility of considering the present deputy counsels, Richard Lehner and Richard Tanenbaum, for the top spot, but indicated the panel would take its time determining who the new staff director will be.

In another development, The Associated Press reported the committee's JFK task force is pursuing two leads that may shed new light on the murder of Kennedy. One of these leads reportedly is that there may be too many bullet fragments for Lee Harvey Oswald to have killed Kennedy by himself.

The other lead, reported to the committee by investigators in a closed-door briefing, is that a woman who worked in a Dallas nightclub is willing to testify that Jack Ruby introduced Oswald to her as "Lee Harvey Oswald of the CIA."

The Warren Commission report concluded that Oswald fired three bullets at Kennedy from a window of the Texas Schoolbook Depository and that Ruby and Oswald did not know one another before the assassination. Ruby shot Oswald to death two days after the president's assassination while Oswald was in police custody.

**THE EVIDENCE** about the bullets is said to be from the head nurse at Parkland Hospital. She was quoted as saying four or five bullet fragments were removed from former Texas Gov. John B. Connally and, if that is true, the three-bullet theory of the FBI and the Warren Commission would no longer be valid.

It would mean that at least four bullets were fired and at least one of these would have had to have been fired from some other vantage point at the Kennedy motorcade.

The woman who worked in the nightclub is said to contend that she was with Ruby and Oswald two weeks before the 1963 murder. Tanenbaum, according to AP, said the same woman is prepared to testify that she was taking pictures at Dealey Plaza when Kennedy was killed and that her film was taken from her two days later by men identifying themselves as being from the CIA and FBI.

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# Probe: Maybe Oswald Was Not Alone

By JOSEPH VOLZ

Washington (News Bureau) — House Assassinations Committee investigators say that new evidence concerning bullet fragments may disprove the Warren Commission conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone killer of President Kennedy 13 years ago.

Robert Tanenbaum, a former New York City prosecutor who now heads the panel's Kennedy assassination investigating team, contends that a nurse at Parkland Hospital in Dallas, where Kennedy and then-Texas Gov. John B. Connally were brought after they were shot, saw four or five bullet fragments removed from Connally. The Warren Commission said that one bullet had passed through Kennedy and Connally, remaining intact.

## From a Grassy Knoll?

Tanenbaum, in secret testimony to the committee on March 17, leaked accidentally by a committee staffer, said the fragments, "if we can locate them," may weigh more than a single bullet. If so, they would demonstrate that at least

two bullets were fired, adding credibility to the theory that two or more persons were shooting at the President.

Many conspiracy theorists claim that shots were not only fired from the Texas School Book Depository, where Oswald's rifle was allegedly found, but also from a grassy knoll near the route of the presidential caravan. The Warren Commission rejected the theory that any shots were fired from the knoll.

Tanenbaum said that the fragments — if they can be found — will also be tested to see if they all came from the same bullet.

Committee investigators, who won House support on Tuesday for a two-year investigation, also have been

trying to find a Dallas woman who claimed that Jack Ruby, the night-club owner who killed Oswald, once introduced her to "Oswald of the CIA."

Tanenbaum believes that the woman — who was not otherwise identified — might help pin down rumors that Ruby and Oswald knew each other and were engaged in some sort of assassination conspiracy.

## The Oswald Killing

Under the most widely held theory, Ruby supposedly killed Oswald to keep him quiet about the identities of the "real" conspirators, who never surfaced.

The woman, who worked in another Dallas night club, also recalled that Oswald was linked to the CIA. There have been various reports that Oswald made contact with the CIA before the assassination. However, there are no confirmed reports that he was ever a CIA employee or that the agency participated in the assassination in any way.

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# Another witness gone, but JFK death probe continues

By Arthur Siddon

Chicago Tribune Press Service

WASHINGTON—The House Assassinations Committee has received a second chance to investigate the murders of President John Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., but it faces great problems.

The 230-to-181 vote Wednesday to continue the committee indicates that more than 40 per cent of the House probably thinks the committee's job is a waste of time and money.

The committee itself has been torn by internal strife that has caused the resignation of its chairman and chief counsel. A key witness recently committed suicide before talking to committee investigators.

"I AM convinced," said Rep. Ed Jenkins [D., Ga.], "that whatever the findings of the committee might be, the American people will not accept the findings. . . . The committee is tainted."

Because of the bickering and inept handling of the investigations the "committee has destroyed its own usefulness," Rep. Robert Bauman [R., Md.] charged.

The 12 members, however, insist that the panel not only is functioning well, but also has leads that will bring definitive answers.

THE ONLY CONFLICT within the committee, Rep. John Anderson [R., Rockford] insists, was between the former chairman, Rep. Henry Gonzalez [D., Tex.] and the chief counsel, Richard Sprague, a former Philadelphia prosecutor.

Gonzalez resigned in early March after complaining he got no support from committee members or the Democratic leadership in his attempts to put a rein on what he termed Sprague's extravagant and arrogant behavior.

In a rare public glimpse of internal congressional feuding, Gonzalez took to the House floor early last week to say "I think I have been treated shabbily."

IN A LONG, rambling speech, Gonzalez told of never getting support promised by House Democratic Leader Jim Wright [Tex.].

He cautiously termed Rep. Richard Bohning [D., Mo.] "the great rajah of the Rules Committee." Rep. Walter Fauntroy [D., D.C.], the vizier of Washington, and John Anderson, "that great apostle of frugality in government."

Gonzalez' resignation, committee members insist, ended the conflict within the committee. But within hours of Gonzalez' attack from the House floor, Sprague quit.

HOUSE SPEAKER Thomas P. O'Neill [D., Mass.], Anderson, and Rep. Louis Stokes [D., Ohio], the new committee chairman, all admit a headcount showed the committee would lose the vote, if Sprague stayed.

"But he was not forced out," Anderson insists. "He saw the handwriting on the wall and said himself the committee would be dead if he did not step aside."

Anderson and other committee members now say the committee is united and ready to work.

THE MAJOR obstacle is the suicide Wednesday of George de Mohrenschildt, a Russian-born professor who reportedly had information about Kennedy's assassination.

"He was a crucial witness for us, based on the information he had," said Rep. Richardson Preyer [D., N. C.], a member of the committee and head of the group probing the Kennedy killing.

De Mohrenschildt, 65, reportedly committed suicide in Palm Beach, Fla., shortly after learning a committee investigator wanted to interview him.

AN ASSOCIATE of Lee Harvey Oswald, de Mohrenschildt had been quoted by a Dutch journalist, Wilhelm Oltmans, as saying: "How do you think the media would react if I came out and said I feel responsible for Oswald's behavior?" This clearly implied he knew of Oswald's plans to murder Kennedy.

Oltmans testified before the committee Friday that de Mohrenschildt had blamed Kennedy's murder on a conspiracy of Texas oilmen and anti-Castro Cubans.

Oltmans quoted de Mohrenschildt as naming the late billionaire oilman H. L. Hunt as one of those involved in the conspiracy. De Mohrenschildt was the middleman between Hunt and Oswald, Oltmans testified.

DE MOHRENSCHILDT'S suicide complicates the investigation but does not end it, committee sources insist.

Another "hot lead", committee sources say, comes from a Dallas woman never before linked to the Kennedy assassination.

According to a transcript of a secret March 17 committee meeting, the woman claims that two weeks before the assassination, Jack Ruby introduced her to a "Lee Harvey Oswald of the CIA" in his Dallas nightclub.

THE SAME WOMAN, the transcript says, was taking photographs near the site of the shooting at the time Kennedy's motorcade was passing.

"Approximately two days after the assassination, two men came to her. One identified himself as an FBI person, the other as a CIA person, and asked her for the film. She gave these two men her film, and she has never seen that film since," the transcript shows an investigator telling committee members.

It is just such reports from committee investigators—raw and unconfirmed—that have kept responsible and respected committee members such as Anderson, Preyer, and Stokes fighting for the committee's survival.

"IN VIEW OF what has happened to the committee in the past, we may have recurring problems of credibility," Anderson admits. "But I think enough new things have turned up to merit continuing the committee. I think we should see this thing through."

The entire committee warned not to expect quick results. A considerable amount of investigation must be computed before public hearings can be held.

The committee will have to make some dramatic disclosures before the end of the year, however, members concede, or face extinction next year.

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# Are There New Leads?

For the much battered House Select Committee on Assassinations, the deal was simple enough. In return for jettisoning abrasive chief counsel Richard Sprague, the panel last week won a new two-year charter to investigate the murders of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. But its vote of confidence in the House (by 230 to 181) was soon overshadowed by controversy over the committee's alleged new evidence in the assassinations—and the sudden suicide of a man one panel member called “a crucial witness for us, based on new information.”

Like most leaks from the committee over the past seven months, last week's disclosures seemed more tantalizing than substantial—more likely to promote public interest and votes for the committee than to resolve unanswered questions about the two murders. The suicide, for example, was a Russian immigrant—and recent mental patient—named George de Mohrenschildt who had known Lee Harvey Oswald before the Kennedy murder but only recently told a foreign journalist that he felt “responsible” for Oswald's behavior. The journalist said de Mohrenschildt claimed that a conspiracy of anti-Castro Cubans and Texas oilmen, including the late millionaire H.L. Hunt, had actually arranged Kennedy's death. But the newsman conceded at one point that de Mohrenschildt also told him that he had made the whole story up, and de Mohrenschildt apparently killed himself with a 20-gauge shotgun almost immediately after learning that committee investigators wanted to question him about it.

The panel's major achievement to date has been simply staying alive through

months of internal friction and external criticism. Following a nasty clash between chief counsel Sprague and Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez of Texas—in which most other panel members backed Sprague (NEWSWEEK, Feb. 21)—Gonzalez resigned as chairman. But his replacement by Rep. Louis Stokes of Ohio did not end the committee's crisis of confidence. At a March 17 secret session, according to a transcript apparently released by accident, members talked about the need for “choreography” and a “scenario” of public disclosures to maintain support for their work. And last week, members decided that their survival demanded that they dump Sprague, a tough Philadelphia prosecutor who alienated many House members.

**‘Shocking’:** News reports of de Mohrenschildt's death also may have helped swing the vote, following as it did the violent deaths of two other witnesses—underworld figures Sam Giancana and John Rosselli—who had been called to the Hill in connection with the Kennedy assassination. Chairman Stokes said de Mohrenschildt was crucial to the Kennedy investigation, despite the fact that his “shocking confession”—as Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans called it—followed a stay in the psychiatric wing at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas last fall and winter.

De Mohrenschildt was hardly a new figure in the Kennedy case. As a member of the Dallas Russian-émigré community in the early 1960s, the Warren Commis-



De Mohrenschildt and wife: A crucial witness?

sion said, de Mohrenschildt befriended Oswald and his Russian wife, Marina; but he said he was threatened by Oswald after helping Marina to leave him at one point. The commission reported that it found no evidence of involvement by de Mohrenschildt in the Kennedy murder, nor any proof that he was a government agent (some sources suggest that de Mohrenschildt's wide-ranging travels as a petroleum engineer were a CIA cover). The commission's files also contain a letter from de Mohrenschildt to Jacqueline Kennedy's mother—Janet Auchincloss, whom he had met years before—that expressed “lingering doubt, notwithstanding all the evidence, of Oswald's guilt.”

**‘Blood Debt’:** This was a far cry from the account by journalist Oltmans, who told various television interviewers—and then the House committee—that de Mohrenschildt had confessed that he was part of a “Dallas conspiracy” of oilmen, a trucking-company executive and Cubans with “a blood debt to settle—they thought President Kennedy had betrayed them at the Bay of Pigs.” “His ties upwards were toward H.L. Hunt directly . . . and downstairs they were going to Lee Harvey Oswald,” Oltmans said, adding that de Mohrenschildt admitted Oswald “acted at his guidance and instructions.” Oltmans said that de Mohrenschildt had also named Jack Ruby and a number of CIA and FBI officials in connection with the conspiracy, and added that these and many other details would be found in the manuscript for a book that the dead man had left with his lawyer in Dallas. But he also told some interviewers that de Mohren-



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Oliphant © 1977 Washington Star

‘Give us one more round, barkeep—we, the House assassinations committee, have decided on unity!’

continued

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schildt had once confessed to him: "I only made up the story [about Oswald] because everybody makes a million dollars off the Kennedy assassination . . ."

Two other new witnesses in the Kennedy case, mentioned in the committee transcript that slipped out last week, also presented problems of credibility and corroboration. A former Dallas nightclub waitress told investigators for the panel that Jack Ruby had introduced her and another woman to "Lee Harvey Oswald of the CIA." That was two weeks before the assassination—after which the other woman disappeared, and the witness herself said nothing about the meeting until now. Another witness, formerly a nurse at Parkland Hospital, said that she saw bullet fragments removed from the body of Texas Gov. John Connally, who was injured in the Kennedy shooting. Committee sources suggested that finding these fragments and testing them might disprove the Warren Commission's theory that a single bullet had wounded both Kennedy and Connally. In fact, such fragments *were* tested by the FBI in 1964. The results were not inconsistent with the single-bullet theory.

**Fantasies:** Beyond those dubious leads, Hill sources said the committee planned to use its scaled-down budget (\$2.7 million this year) to interview everyone in Dealey Plaza when Kennedy was shot, conduct another round of ballistics tests on the bullet that killed Martin Luther King and search for more new witnesses in both cases. Progress was possible, said panel member Richardson Preyer of North Carolina, "now that we've gotten beyond developing something every week to keep the committee alive." But the question remained whether the committee was really on to any genuine new leads in the two murders or was simply pursuing the rumors and fantasies that both cases have produced in abundance.

—DAVID M. ALPERN with HENRY W. HUBBARD and JOHN J. LINDSAY in Washington

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JAN 10 1964  
FBI - WASHINGTON



# Oswald's Pal Told Me Of JFK Plot: Reporter

By JOSEPH VOLZ

Washington (News Bureau)—Willem Oltmans, a Dutch television reporter, said yesterday that he was told of a conspiracy involving Texas oilmen, anti-Castro Cubans and Lee Harvey Oswald in the assassination of President Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963.

Oltmans made the allegations on two network television shows, saying that George deMohrenschildt, a Russian-



Willem  
Oltmans

born language professor who lived in Dallas and who reportedly was a friend of Oswald, had been his source.

De Mohrenschildt apparently killed himself last Tuesday in Palm Beach, Fla., after learning that House Assassinations Committee investigators planned to question him about the Kennedy killing.

The Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination, reported that deMohrenschildt had known Oswald in Dallas, but said that he knew nothing of the assassination.

Oltmans was interviewed on television before going behind closed doors

for three hours of supposedly secret testimony under oath before the Assassinations Committee. Rep. Richardson Preyer (D-N.C.), chairman of the subcommittee investigating Kennedy's murder, said later that the panel had received no other evidence during its six months of existence that could confirm Oltman's account.

Oltmans told reporters that de Mohrenschildt, who was then "close to tears," confessed Feb. 27 that he had instructed Oswald "from A to Z" on the assassination. De Mohrenschildt reportedly said that he "knew Oswald was going to kill Kennedy sooner or later."

## "Named CIA and FBI Officials"

The journalist said de Mohrenschildt, in a book manuscript, "named CIA and FBI officials who according to him are connected with the Kennedy assassination."

The journalist said he believes the story even though he said de Mohrenschildt vacillated between insisting it was true and saying he made it up to sell the book.

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## Daughter Denies Oswald Friend Feared Testifying

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (UPI)

— The daughter of a Russian emigre language teacher who killed himself Tuesday has denied that her father feared being called upon to testify before a congressional inquiry into the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

But Alexandra de Mohrenschildt, 33, said over the weekend that her father, George de Mohrenschildt, was "mentally and physically afraid" of Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans.

In testimony to the House Assassinations Committee last week, Oltmans said de Mohrenschildt told him he was involved in a conspiracy with Lee Harvey Oswald to kill Kennedy in Dallas in November 1963.

At a news conference called to reply to Oltmans' statements, she said, "It's completely contrary to anything I ever heard my father say.

"That my father had anything to do with the assassination of President Kennedy, that my father had anything to do with masterminding the assassination, is completely contrary to anything he said to me — nothing remotely like that," she said.

De Mohrenschildt shot himself about an hour after learning an investigator for the assassinations committee had attempted to see him.

Committee members have described de Mohrenschildt, a French teacher at Dallas' Bishop College and a reputed former CIA agent, as a "crucial witness."

The woman said her father was "not afraid or upset about the possibility of testifying . . . because in 1964 he told everything he knew about the assassination to the Warren Commission."

However, she said de Mohrenschildt was "just terrified" of Oltmans. "He felt he had been drugged in Amsterdam (where Oltmans interviewed him for Dutch television). And he was afraid that Mrs. Oltman was trying to make him do and say things he had never done."

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## Lawyer Says Texan Told Him Oswald Had Aid in '63 Plot

DALLAS, April 2 (UPI)—An attorney said today that George de Mohrenschildt convinced him before he died that there had been a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy, but "never did indicate" that he was involved in it.

"I definitely feel there was a conspiracy and that definitely was the opinion of George," said Pat S. Russell, who was Mr. Mohrenschildt's attorney. "But George never did indicate any involvement."

Mr. de Mohrenschildt shot himself to death last Tuesday in Palm Beach, Fla., shortly after being told that the House Assassinations Committee was seeking his testimony.

Mr. Russell was subpoenaed by committee investigators yesterday to produce documents Mr. de Mohrenschildt left with him. Mr. Russell said he planned to turn over the documents, but added that they would shed little light on the alleged conspiracy.

"There may be opinions to be had that might be interesting, that might lead to further investigation, but there's nothing substantial or startling," he said.

A Dutch journalist, Willem Oltmans, told the Congressional committee yesterday that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had implicated himself in the conspiracy, along with the late H. L. Hunt, the Texas oil millionaire, Lester Logue, anti-Castro Cubans and others.

Mr. Russell confirmed reports that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had told him that Lee Harvey Oswald, who was identified by the Warren Commission as the assassin, considered him a "father figure." Mr. de Mohrenschildt, a Russian-born language professor at Dallas's Bishop College, and his wife were friends of Mr. Oswald and his Russian-born wife, Marina.

Mr. Russell said that the papers his client had left him included "a book-length manuscript which describes in minute detail his relations with Lee Harvey Oswald, two unpublished pictures of Oswald, lengthy tapes made by George and his wife shortly after the assassination and other correspondence and memorabilia."

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## WITNESS TIES OSWALD TO OILMEN AND CUBANS

Newsman Tells Panel That Suicide  
Had Related Conspiracy Story

By WENDELL RAWLS Jr.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 1—A Dutch journalist said today he had told the House Assassinations Committee that the mysterious potential witness who allegedly committed suicide Tuesday had told him that Texas oilmen and anti-Castro Cubans had conspired with Lee Harvey Oswald to kill President Kennedy.

Willem Oltmans, a television newsman, was called before the panel after he said in various morning press and television interviews that the alleged conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy involved not only Mr. Oswald but also George de Mohrenschildt, who apparently shot himself in Palm Beach, Fla.; the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, H. L. Hunt, the late Texas oil millionaire, and Mr. Oswald's assassin, Jack Ruby.

### Found Him 'Very Specific'

Mr. Oltmans also gave hearsay testimony that there may have been a \$50,000 contract out to kill Mr. Kennedy. He said he had met an oil worker who said he had been offered the contract.

After Mr. Oltmans testified, Representative Richardson Preyer, Democrat of North Carolina who is chairman of the subcommittee investigating the Kennedy assassination, was asked if he believed Mr. Oltmans's story.

"Ask me that question again in a few months," Mr. Preyer replied. "Mr. Oltmans was very specific on some things which can be corroborated, but not as clear on others."

An F.B.I. spokesman said that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had "been interviewed extensively by the F.B.I. and testified before the Warren Commission and all of his information was not pertinent to the assassination." He added:

"All the information coming from Mr. Oltmans about Mr. de Mohrenschildt is all new to us and probably all new to reality."

A source in the F.B.I. said that Mr.

de Mohrenschildt had attempted suicide four times in the past six months before succeeding last Tuesday.

The committee met two weeks ago to discuss ways of winning enough Congressional and public support of its inquiry to keep the committee alive. Some of the methods discussed were public hearings featuring truculent witnesses and secret briefings that could generate publicity.

### Declines to Disclose Evidence

Mr. Oltmans, who testified for three hours in closed session, later declined to tell newsmen what evidence he had to support his claim. But he said that he and Mr. de Mohrenschildt had been friends for about 10 years and that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had said he was a middle-man between Mr. Oswald and Mr. Hunt. He said that Mr. de Mohrenschildt told him that Cubans shot at Mr. Kennedy at the same time that Mr. Oswald did.

A spokesman for Ruth Hunt, Mr. Hunt's widow, his youngest son, Ray Hunt, and the Hunt estate said: "Any allegations by Willem Oltmans that H.L. Hunt was involved with Mr. de Mohrenschildt or Oswald in any way are figments of a strained and distorted imagination. It is ludicrous to state that H.L. Hunt had anything to do with the assassination of President Kennedy."

Mr. Oltmans said that he had given the assassination committee "the name of an F.B.I. official, not [the late director, J. Edgar] Hoover, who might be important," and that he had given it a taped interview in which a Cuban exile named Loran Hall says he was offered \$50,000 in the office of a Dallas oilman, Lester Logue, to kill President Kennedy.

Mr. Logue called the allegation "ridiculous," and said he would meet with his lawyers to discuss suing Mr. Oltmans for libel. He called Mr. Oltmans a "publicity psychopath," and said, "This just demonstrates the absolute power that the media has to destroy somebody without recourse."

The theory of Mr. Hunt's involvement has been advanced before but has never been corroborated. A spokesman for the Hunt family and estate said that they "have finally had about enough of such charges."

"It has been publicly recorded that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had a history of mental problems," the spokesman said. "If in fact Mr. de Mohrenschildt ever claimed to have had any relationship with H. L. Hunt, those claims must be viewed accordingly."

The commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren that investigated President Kennedy's assassination in 1963 concluded that Mr. Oswald was the lone assassin.

Earlier today, Mr. Oltmans said in an NBC radio interview that the reason the Cubans wanted to kill President Kennedy was that "they thought they had a blood debt to settle—they thought that President Kennedy had betrayed them at the Bay of Pigs." He said that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had told him he never knew, in fact, who killed Mr. Kennedy because an unspecified number of Cubans were supposed to be shooting at the same time Mr. Oswald did.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt, who was born in Russia, reportedly befriended Mr. Oswald and his wife, Marina, before the assassination. Mrs. Oswald also was Russian-born.

Mr. Oltmans said that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had told him that Mr. Oswald had acted at Mr. Mohrenschildt's guidance and instructions.

"Mr. de Mohrenschildt indicated to me very strongly that his ties upwards were towards H.L. Hunt and downstairs to Lee Harvey Oswald," Mr. Oltmans said in an ABC television interview.

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# Ex-CIA man hints JFK knew of Castro plots

By David Nyhan  
Globe Staff

A former Central Intelligence Agency official maintains that he "cannot conceive" that President John F. Kennedy was unaware of CIA plots to kill Cuban leader Fidel Castro.

Harry Rositzke said in an interview this week, "There was a great deal of discussion about assassinating Castro at the highest levels of the government" in the early 1960s.

"I left it at that" in the book, he said.

"The Attorney General (Robert F. Kennedy) knew about it. It's hard to use the word 'condoned' or 'approved,'" Rositzke said, because initial planning for the abortive Castro plots took place under the Eisenhower Administration.

"And I cannot conceive the Attorney General knowing about this without telling the President."

Rositzke, who retired in 1970 and is author of a book about the CIA, said speculation that some US officials may have been involved in attempts to aid in the assassination of President Kennedy is "one of the absolutely blatant false accusations ... there was no indication, no evidence of any sort."

He said it is clear now that Eisenhower ordered the assassination of African leader Patrice Lumumba, but that Lumumba was killed before US efforts could succeed.

"The Senate (intelligence committee) report found no documentary evidence that President Kennedy or Robert Kennedy knew of any CIA plans, with or without the use of the Mafia, to assassinate Castro. I talked to Sen. (Frank) Church about this, and he said, 'We put down the facts such as we had them, and it was up to the reader to determine whether or not they (the Kennedy brothers) did know.'"

Rositzke said, "My personal view, and I talked to many of the people

connected with this, is that the circumstantial evidence makes it really quite clear that the Attorney General must have known about these matters, that he was, after the Bay of Pigs, in very close contact, in fact to a certain extent kind of running the CIA, at his brother's request."

Rositzke, who refused to reveal his last title at the CIA, said Robert Kennedy was socially friendly with Desmond Fitzgerald, a CIA official at the time, and that Fitzgerald was "highly accessible to the Administration."

Rositzke's book, "The CIA's Secret Operations: Espionage, Counterespionage, and Covert Action," Readers Digest Press, \$12.95, has an introduction by Arthur Schlesinger Jr., a friend of Rositzke's since 1945, when the pair were at Harvard.

The introduction has Schlesinger calling the work "much more complete than any account available to the public ... absorbing."

Asked what Schlesinger thought of his theory that both Kennedy brothers knew of the Castro plots, Rositzke replied, "This is something obviously Arthur Schlesinger has a big fight with me about."

Schlesinger was an official of the Kennedy Administration.

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TIME  
11 APRIL 1977



TV NEWSMAN WILLEM OLTMANS



THE DE MOHRENSCHILDTS IN 1974

## CONGRESS

# Assassination: Now a Suicide Talks

*"Let's face it. I only made up the story [about Lee Harvey Oswald] because everybody makes a million dollars off the Kennedy assassination, and I haven't made anything. So now it's my time."*

—George de Mohrenschildt, quoted by Willem Oltmans

That grotesque confession should be sufficient to discredit the man who made it, a Russian-born teacher and friend of Lee Harvey Oswald's named George de Mohrenschildt. But nothing ever seems sufficient to still Kennedy assassination stories; time and events merely complicate them. Last week—only an hour after a congressional investigator asked to meet with him in Manalapan, Fla.—De Mohrenschildt apparently committed suicide by putting a 20-gauge shotgun in his mouth and pulling the trigger. Suddenly there was intense interest in what he might have told the investigator. Sure enough, within 48 hours, a world-traveling Dutch TV newsman, Willem Oltmans, showed up to reveal to a closed session of the House Select Committee on Assassinations—plus ABC, NBC and CBS—what De Mohrenschildt had been telling him during the several years of their acquaintance.

Oltmans' testimony—given under oath—was sensational stuff. De Mohrenschildt, said Oltmans, claimed he had been the middleman in a conspiracy of rich Texas oilmen, headed by the late H.L. Hunt, and anti-Castro Cubans to

kill Kennedy. Oswald was one gunman, but supposedly several Cubans were also assigned to shoot the President. One could even be identified. Oltmans provided the committee with a picture of a Cuban whom he said fired shots at Kennedy. But apart from the dramatic backdrop provided by De Mohrenschildt's suicide, the story was just another series of rumors that could not be corroborated.

At the time of the Kennedy assassination, De Mohrenschildt was an oil geologist employed by the U.S. State Department in Haiti. He had known Oswald for a year (they were members of a Russian-speaking group in Dallas), and he told the Warren Commission in 1964 that he knew nothing of Oswald's role in the Kennedy killing. But during a series of meetings with Oltmans beginning in 1966, De Mohrenschildt began to remember things differently. By 1975, during an interview with Oltmans on Dutch television, he insisted that Oswald was led by others. Oltmans told colleagues, "De Mohrenschildt knows a lot more than he is willing to say right now." Later De Mohrenschildt was to go so far as to say he felt "responsible" for Oswald's behavior.

In February of this year, De Mohrenschildt told Oltmans he was ready to disclose more but only outside the U.S.—he feared for his life in America. By now De Mohrenschildt seemed depressed. He had been hospitalized as a

psychiatric patient for two months at the end of last year, and he had twice attempted suicide. Said Patrick Russell, his Dallas attorney: "He began to have bizarre hallucinations and distortions. He believed people were following him."

According to Oltmans, De Mohrenschildt would vacillate between claiming his conspiracy tale was a hoax and asserting it was true. In addition to De Mohrenschildt's instability, doubts are thrown on his story by a review of Warren Commission testimony that shows De Mohrenschildt last saw Oswald six months before the assassination. "It is absolutely out of the question that De Mohrenschildt had anything to do with Kennedy's death," fumes Chicago Attorney Albert Jenner, who interviewed De Mohrenschildt for the Warren Commission. Adds Jenner of the House Assassination Committee's entire performance: "Utterly disgusting."

The committee members who heard Oltmans' testimony took a wait-and-see attitude. "I think he is telling the truth as he perceives it," said D.C. Delegate Walter Fauntroy. Oltmans himself cited an obviously disturbing aspect of his charges. Asked a tough question during a television interview, he replied, "Well, I'm quoting Mr. De Mohrenschildt, so that makes it very easy"—De Mohrenschildt being in no position to amend the record.

Oltmans' testimony was only the climax in a hectic week during which the House Select Committee on Assassinations barely escaped its own death by sacrificing its controversial counsel, Richard Sprague. The outspoken ex-district attorney from Philadelphia had angered too many Congressmen with his demands for a \$13 million budget and a staff of 175 for the two-year investigation (TIME, Jan. 10).

**Too Raw.** With Sprague out of the way, the House was willing to vote 230 to 181 to continue the investigations on a reduced annual budget of \$2.8 million. But Sprague's departure left the committee staff demoralized and committee members full of praise for their former counsel. Gushed Illinois Republican John Anderson: "He laid himself on the altar of sacrifice."

To date, no firm fruits of Sprague's early work have reached the public. Nevertheless, a rush of rumor, innuendo and unconfirmed leads has blared from the committee. The latest concerns a letter the FBI is investigating said to have been written by Oswald to a "Mr. Hunt" asking about "my position." It is dated 14 days before the Kennedy assassination. The committee's operation has outraged many Congressmen. Snarled Michigan's John Dingell: "They tell us they have persuasive evidence! What they have is a lot of crap!"

Even Richard Sprague hit a cautious note before resigning: "The only things that [the staff] can say of significance are things that are so raw and uncorroborated for us to be stating publicly."

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JLL

# The Man Who Knew Oswald

By George McMillan

**T**HAT "crucial witness" on the John F. Kennedy assassination who killed himself last week just before he was to be questioned by a House assassinations committee investigator did have something to say.

But what George de Mohrenschildt could have testified to was not "new" evidence at all and it had nothing whatsoever to do with a conspiracy.

In fact, he had already said what he had to say, and when his memory was fresh, in 1964 before the Warren Commission. He was one of the commission's key witnesses and its printed record includes 118 pages of testimony from de Mohrenschildt and almost an equal amount from his wife, in all nearly 300 pages.

But the truth about de Mohrenschildt is more fantastic than the wildest assassination conspiracy theory. It is one of the incredible ironies of history that the paths of de Mohrenschildt and Lee Harvey Oswald should have crossed, as they did, a few months before Oswald killed Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963.

In fact, de Mohrenschildt knew Oswald better than anyone else alive, except perhaps for Oswald's wife, Marina, from September, 1962, until April, 1963 — when de Mohrenschildt moved from Dallas.

It isn't at all difficult to believe that de Mohrenschildt had at one time or another worked for the CIA, and it is a matter of record that he was an agent for the French government in the United States during World War II when he was posing as a perfume salesman.

I can speak with some authority about de Mohrenschildt's life because he once asked me to write his life story and I spent many hours listening to him recount some of his bizarre, almost unbelievable episodes. I came across him when in 1964 I was working for a television network as a special investigator on what was to become an hour-long documentary on the John F. Kennedy assassination.

I was probably the first of many reporters who had "exclusive" interviews with de Mohrenschildt, and mine has a special flavor because I had to go to Haiti to find him.

I stayed with de Mohrenschildt and his wife in their lovely house which clutched the side of a steep hill overlooking Port-Au-Prince — and which was, not insignificantly, I suppose, within the compound where Papa Doc Duvalier then lived. We had to pass through heavily-guarded gates as we came and went.

I learned from him how he had eventually married three socially-prominent women, one of whom was a Philadelphia heiress. He told me how he had worked in U.S. missions in Yugoslavia, in Ghana, and how he has walked the length of Mexico with his fourth wife and two small dogs.

This woman, de Mohrenschildt's widow, was a White Russian who had been born the daughter of the director of the Chinese Far Eastern Railway, in Harbin, and who had danced in nightclubs in Shanghai and Tientsin under the name "Fomenko." Her career brought her eventually to New York's Rainbow Room.

De Mohrenschildt himself was born in 1911 in Mozyr, Byelorussia, the son of a land-poor nobleman whose family migrated to Poland in 1922. De Mohrenschildt got part of his higher education — he held two Ph.D.s — in Belgium, and eventually he came to the U.S. — in 1938.

The tragedy of his life was the death of his two children by the former Wynne Sharples, of Philadelphia. Both died of cystic fibrosis, and de Mohrenschildt was active in founding the National Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and succeeded in getting Jackie Kennedy to serve as honorary chairman when she was First Lady.

**H**IS PROFESSIONAL training was as a petroleum engineer, and he went to Dallas in the early 1950s to search out and exploit oil leases.

He did not do well in Dallas, and, although he was a member of the influential Petroleum Club, he made his social life in the city's Russian emigre colony, some of whose members tried to help Lee and Marina Oswald when they moved to Dallas in 1962. It was then and through this world that de Mohrenschildt and his wife met the Oswalds.

De Mohrenschildt talked many times with an Oswald who had not talked that much to anybody else. They

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continued

talked mostly about politics. They agreed on most things — they both hated the John Birch Society which was active in Dallas at that time, they both hated the FBI and they both admired John F. Kennedy and Castro.

It was the accidental conjunction of their lives, and not the fact that George was an acute observer, that made him a valuable witness for the Warren Commission. Under thorough questioning, George was able to recreate the life of the Oswalds at a critical juncture in their history and to reveal the political content of Lee Harvey Oswald's mind as it was a few months before Oswald killed Kennedy.

At the commission's request, he reconstructed each of his meetings with Oswald. At the end of his lengthy interrogation, de Mohrenschildt was asked to make an appraisal of Oswald. He was condescending and said he didn't think that Oswald was very intelligent.

De Mohrenschildt was too self-centered, too arrogant, to be sensitive to the feelings of others, and I did not find him to be the kind of person who could give any insight into why Oswald killed Kennedy. It seems apparent that Oswald had not decided to do so at the time de Mohrenschildt moved to Haiti.

That is why it seems unlikely that de Mohrenschildt had anything more to tell anybody — especially in March, 1977, 14 years after the event, 14 disastrous years in de Mohrenschildt's personal life. His last job was as a teacher in a small college and that ended when he simply stopped turning up for work. For months before he took his life, he had talked about committing suicide to his friends who were still members of that Russian emigre group in Dallas. They took him to dinner, tried to stimulate his interest in life again. They failed and he was admitted for three months to the Parkland Hospital psychiatric unit in 1975.

Some of the reports on de Mohrenschildt's death said he "felt guilty." He may have done so in the last stages of his life, but for years after the Kennedy assassination he did not show any signs of remorse. It was his wife who had him committed to Parkland Hospital and she did so because he had begun to think he was being followed. The question is whether de Mohrenschildt was responsible in February and March of this year when he gave his



Associated Press

*George de Mohrenschildt and his wife hold a picture of President and Mrs. Kennedy.*

last interviews to newsmen.

He most certainly did not end his life because he was about to be questioned by a congressional committee. He most certainly did not know that Lee Harvey Oswald was going to kill Kennedy. What he failed to realize was that the difference between his rambling fantasies and those of Oswald's was the core of murderous anger that lay at the center of Oswald.

De Mohrenschildt's diagnosis of Oswald's situation was that Oswald seemed "too tense." He told Oswald, "You should take a drink once in a while and go out to a party."

But Oswald and history had it otherwise.

*McMillan is the author of "The Making of an Assassin: The Life of James Earl Ray."*



# Dutch Journalist's Theory: Wide Conspiracy in JFK's Murder

But Can Willem Oltmans' Bombshells Be Believed?

By Jeremiah O'leary  
Washington Star Staff Writer

Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans has presented the House Assassinations Committee with enough bombshells alleging conspiracies against the life of President John F. Kennedy to keep the panel occupied for the rest of the year.

Unfortunately, for the committee and for public credibility, the persons mentioned by Oltmans are either dead or deny the allegation or are not immediately accessible to be asked about the sworn testimony of the witness.

**OLTMANS TESTIFIED** for three hours before the panel's Kennedy subcommittee yesterday behind closed doors.

The essence of Oltmans' story is that he had been told of a conspiracy to assassinate Kennedy involving Lee Harvey Oswald, the FBI, the CIA, some Texas oilmen, Jack Ruby, a group of anti-Castro Cubans and a Russian-born Dallas professor named George de Mohrenschildt. Oltmans' primary known source was de Mohrenschildt, who committed suicide last Tuesday in Florida and who earlier had disappeared in Brussels on March 7 while negotiating the sale of a book he has written about the alleged conspiracy.

The manuscript of de Mohrenschildt's book, entitled "I'm a Patsy. I'm a Patsy," is in the possession of his Dallas lawyer, Pat S. Russell. It purports to tell the whole story of the conspiracy and, according to Oltmans, describes how de Mohrenschildt considered himself responsible for Oswald's actions. Russell has not returned newsmen's calls but it is understood he has confirmed to investigators that he has the de Mohrenschildt manuscript.

**U.S. SOURCES** said Russell intends to hold on to the de Mohrenschildt papers. Behind the scenes, officials are awaiting a decision on whether the House committee will obtain the documents by subpoena or whether the FBI will seek access to them by court order.

Rep. Hal Sawyer, R-Mich, said he

was outraged by the nature of the Oltmans testimony before the subcommittee headed by Rep. Richardson Preyer, D-N.C. "This is hearsay, twice removed," he said vehemently.

Other members of Congress implied that the value of the Oltmans testimony was in doubt since four of the alleged conspirators are dead: de Mohrenschildt, oil millionaire H.L. Hunt, Oswald and Ruby. But Oltmans told newsmen after the hearing yesterday that the committee asked him for, and will get, all the letters he received from de Mohrenschildt over the past 11 years.

"De Mohrenschildt told me that Oswald acted at his (de Mohrenschildt's) instructions and that he knew Oswald was going to kill Kennedy," Oltmans said.

**OLTMANS ALSO** told the committee:

- That Oswald and the late H. L. Hunt were "very close."
- That a Texas geological engineer named Loren Hall claimed he was offered \$50,000 in the office of a Dallas attorney named Lester Logue for the assassination of Kennedy.
- That de Mohrenschildt told him he had discussed the assassination of Kennedy with Oswald "from A to Z."

Oltmans said he gave the committee the name and picture of a Cuban veteran of the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba who was part of the conspiracy. The motivation of the Cuban exile conspirators for killing Kennedy, according to Oltmans, was their conviction that the President had betrayed them at the Bay of Pigs.

In Dallas the Associated Press quoted Logue, a self-styled conservative Republican, as calling Oltmans a "publicity psychopath" and saying the charge involving him is "ridiculous." Logue said he intended to meet with his lawyers to discuss suing Oltmans for libel.

**IN DENVER**, a spokesman for the Hunt family, Claude Fleet, said, "Oltmans' statements will be recognized by most people for what they

are, an effort on his part to gain some personal attention and notoriety by using names of persons no longer living or able to speak for or defend themselves." He said Hunt's sons, Herbert and Bunker, had no knowledge of their father ever meeting de Mohrenschildt.

Another Hunt family spokesman, James C. Oberwetter, said "since it has been reported de Mohrenschildt had a history of mental problems, if in fact de Mohrenschildt ever claimed to have had any relationship with H. L. Hunt, those claims must be viewed accordingly."

The Star has confirmed that de Mohrenschildt attempted suicide four times last year in Dallas, using drugs and by cutting his wrists, and was in fact a hospitalized mental patient just before he and Oltmans got together in Dallas more than a month ago. It was there, Oltmans said, that de Mohrenschildt said he was ready to tell his story, but only outside the United States.

Oltmans and de Mohrenschildt then went to Holland to talk to Dutch publishers about the book but de Mohrenschildt abruptly departed and was not heard of again until his death Tuesday in Palm Beach.

After Oltmans testified, Preyer was asked if he believed the conspiracy story unfolded by Oltmans. "Ask me that question again in a few months," said Preyer. "Mr. Oltmans was very specific on some things which can be corroborated but not as clear on others."

**AS NEWSMEN** put together Oltmans' various accounts, his story seems to be that de Mohrenschildt was the middle man between the conspirators and Oswald. The Dutch journalist, who variously describes himself as working for Dutch national television and as a freelancer, says Oswald and an unknown number of Cubans fired at Kennedy at the same time.

If Oltmans has any proof of the conspiracy he says revolved around de Mohrenschildt, he did not offer it to newsmen who waited to talk to him after his testimony. Oltmans was interviewed last month by committee investigators when de Mohrenschildt was still considered a missing person.

He also did not name the CIA and FBI personnel allegedly involved in the plot to kill Kennedy.

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# Assertions About Oswald Confronting House Group

By MARTIN WALDRON

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 3—Last Thursday, George de Mohrenschildt, a 65-year-old self-styled promoter who enjoyed the company of rich men and beautiful women and had a sometimes dangerous habit of sketching and photographing defense installations in various countries, was killed by a shotgun blast in Palm Beach, Fla.

His death, at the home of relatives of his daughter, Alexandra, was said by the police to be a suicide. Earlier, Mr. de Mohrenschildt had learned that a Congressional committee was prepared to investigate his connection with Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President Kennedy. The following subsequent developments heightened public interest last week:

A Dutch reporter, Willem Oltmans, appearing before the House Select Committee on Assassinations, quoted Mr. de Mohrenschildt as having said that he had arranged for Mr. Oswald to kill the President and that the assassination had been instigated by Texas oilmen, including the late billionaire H.L. Hunt of Dallas.

A retired Texas newspaper editor, Penn Jones Jr., who has been fascinated by the Kennedy assassination for 13 years, released a copy of a letter to a "Mr. Hunt" asking for "information concerning my position." The letter, dated two weeks before President Kennedy was slain, was said to be from Mr. Oswald. The House committee must establish whether there is any relevance or truth to these allegations if it is, once and for all, to explain President Kennedy's assassination and the 1968 murder of the Rev. Dr. Martin L. King Jr.

Hundreds of people claim a knowledge of the two murders. There have been allegations that President Kennedy and Dr. King were killed by the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, jealous husbands, Cubans, Vietnamese, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, gangsters, Texas oilmen and munitions makers.

Official investigations found that Mr. Oswald, acting alone, shot President Kennedy for complex personal reasons, and that James Earl Ray, an escaped convict, also acting alone and also for personal reasons, killed Dr. King.

Since its establishment last September, the special House committee has spent about \$350,000. Staff members told the committee last month that there were "promising" new leads, but neither the de Mohrenschildt accusations nor the Hunt letter is new. None of the other "leads" described at a secret committee meeting appear to be new, either.

The "Hunt letter" first became known in the summer of 1975. A number of assassination students, most of them private citizens, got copies of it in the mail from Mexico City.

The letter has excited some interest in the last few days because Justice Department sources said the F.B.I. had confirmed that the letter was in Mr. Oswald's handwriting.

The 39-word letter was dated Nov. 8, 1963, two weeks before Mr. Kennedy was slain. Mr. Oswald was living in Dallas and working at the Texas Schoolbook Depository.

The letter said: "Dear Mr. Hunt, I would like information concerning my position. I am asking only for information. I am suggesting that we discuss the matter more fully before any steps are taken by me or anyone else. Thank you. Lee Harvey Oswald."

Mr. Jones said he received a photocopy of the handwritten letter in August or September, 1975, at his home in Midlothian, Texas, where he once ran a prize-winning weekly newspaper, The Midlothian Mirror.

Accompanying the photocopy was a typewritten note in Spanish, saying that the sender, who signed himself "P.S.," had sent a photocopy of the letter to the F.B.I. in late 1974 and had not heard from the bureau.

"Senor P.S.," as he became known, also

wrote that he feared something might happen to him and that he was going into hiding for a time. On the back of the envelope containing the photocopy and the note was a return address: "Insurgentes Sud, No. 309, Mexico, Df, Mexico."

Number 309 South Insurgentes in Mexico City is a four-story white stone apartment house containing a number of lower-middle-class flats. On the first floor of the building are two low-quality clothing stores and a small shop selling national lottery tickets.

Mr. Jones said that he gave his copy of the "Hunt letter" to The Dallas Morning News last month. The newspaper reported that it had had the letter analyzed by three independent handwriting experts who, like the F.B.I., concluded that it had been written by Mr. Oswald. The experts said they had compared the letter with others known to have been written by Oswald.

There was no indication of how "Senor P.S." had come into possession of the Oswald letter.

Harold Weisberg of Frederick, Md., a former Senate investigator who has devoted the past 12 years to researching the Kennedy and King murders, said he got a copy of the letter in the mail in August 1975, as did Howard Roffman of Gainesville, Fla., a law school graduate.

## Letters Unanswered

Mr. Weisberg and Mr. Jones said they had written o he address on the envelope and had not received answers, though their letters were not returned as undelivered.

The family of Mr. Hunt, who died Nov. 29, 1974, has protested published assertions that the letter was written to him.

In 1964, the F.B.I. checked the Hunt family in connection with the Kennedy assassination, but no member of the family testified before the commission headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, which investigated the assassination. Several of Mr. Hunt's sons have called "ridiculous" the notion that any of the Hunts had been connected with the murder.

An associate of the Hunt family said yesterday that H.L. Hunt and members of his family "are not the only Hunts around."

"Wasn't there a Hunt connected with the C.I.A. back in 1963?" he asked.

There has been no evidence linking E. Howard Hunt, a C.I.A. agent who was involved in the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, to Mr. Oswald. Mr. Hunt has just been released from Federal prison; he had been convicted of complicity in the burglary of the Democratic National Committee Headquarters at the

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continued

Dear Mr. Hunt.

Nov. 8, 1963

I would like information  
concerning my position.

I am asking only for information.  
I am suggesting that we discuss the  
matter fully before any steps are  
taken by me or anyone else.

Thank You.

Lee Harvey Oswald

United Press International

Copy of letter reportedly written by Lee Harvey Oswald to a "Mr. Hunt" two weeks before the assassination of President Kennedy.

Watergate Hotel in Washington in 1972.

The Oswald "Hunt letter" aroused still more interest after Mr. de Mohrenschildt's death, when Mr. Oltmans came forward to say publicly that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had linked H.L. Hunt to Mr. Oswald.

Relatives and associates of Mr. de Mohrenschildt said he was hospitalized recently for treatment of mental disorders, including paranoia, and tried to kill himself several times previously.

The House Assassinations Committee had heard part of the de Mohrenschildt story from Mr. Oltmans last month and had been searching for him to ask him to testify.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt died after he learned last week that a committee investigator had gone to Palm Beach to talk to him.

The authorities in the Florida city said that Mr. de Mohrenschildt had left a number of personal papers but that none of them seemed to be connected in any way to Mr. Oswald or the Kennedy administration.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt's daughter, Alexandra Taylor, whom he was visiting at the time of his death, said her father was "mentally and physically afraid" of Mr. Oltmans.

The Texan had gone to Amsterdam with Mr. Oltmans earlier last month. He tried to sell a book manuscript on the Kennedy slaying and appeared on television with Mr. Oltmans there.

"He felt he had been drugged in Amsterdam," Mrs. Taylor said. She also reported that her father had been mentally ill recently.

#### Treated for Paranoia

Other associates of Mr. de Mohrenschildt reported that he was treated for paranoia for some weeks in Dallas earlier this year. He was a teacher at a small school in Dallas, Bishop College.

During his adventurous life, Mr. de Mohrenschildt had many careers: perfume salesman, oil geologist, polo player, Polish cavalry officer, movie producer and, many believed, spy.

At one point in World War II, Mr. de Mohrenschildt was suspected of spying by both the United States and Mexico and was detained and questioned in both countries.

The United States incident came after he and Lilia Pardo Larin, then his mistress, were observed photographing and sketching the beachfront near Corpus Christi, Texas.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt told the Warren Commission in April 1964 that he had not realized the area he was sketching had defense fortifications. He said he resented having been considered a German spy.

Later in World War II he was expelled from Mexico, but he said that was because a high-ranking Mexican official wanted to steal Mrs. Larin from him, that it had no connection with his being suspected of espionage.

In 1957, soldiers fired on Mr. de Mohrenschildt and his fourth wife, Jeanne, as they sketched and took photographs of a Yugoslav beach while sitting in a boat. "The little island we thought was completely empty, not a soul on it, they had fortifications on that island," Mrs. de Mohrenschildt told the Warren Commission.

The de Mohrenschildts testified before the commission after they had been investigated for weeks by dozens of F.B.I. agents.

The commission was interested in the de Mohrenschildts because they were friendly with the Oswalds. The de Mohrenschildts said they had met the Oswalds through the Russian-speaking community in Dallas and had felt sorry for Marina Oswald, whom Mr. Oswald met and married while in Russia in the early 1960's.

In April 1963, the de Mohrenschildts went to Haiti, where he tried to promote a deal with the government of the late President Francois Duvalier to search for oil and minerals. They were still living in Haiti when Mr. Kennedy was killed.

The Warren Commission and the F.B.I. concluded that there was no evidence to suggest that the de Mohrenschildts had had any connection with the assassination.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt told the commission that he was not sure Mr. Oswald had killed President Kennedy and that Mr. Oswald had not seemed inclined to political violence. Mr. de Mohrenschildt told the commission:

"In my opinion, if Lee Oswald did kill the President, this might be the reason for it: That he was insanely jealous of an extraordinarily successful man, who was young, attractive, had a beautiful wife, had all the money in the world and was a world figure. And poor Oswald was just the opposite. He had nothing. He had a bitchy wife, had no money, was a miserable failure in everything he did."

An accidentally released transcript of a secret meeting of the House Assassination Committee on March 17 disclosed that much of the information the committee "uncovered" in its six months of operation has been available for years.

# JFK Probe: Some Loud Reports But There's No Smoking Gun

By JOSEPH VOLZ

Washington (News Bureau)—Sensational "new revelations" of a reported all-encompassing Kennedy assassination conspiracy involving not only Lee Harvey Oswald, but also his killer, Jack Ruby, several Texas oilmen and at least one veteran of the Cuban Bay of Pigs debacle are providing the shaky House Assassinations Committee with big headlines these days.

But a review of the Warren Commission's 1964 report into the slaying of President Kennedy in Dallas

## An Analysis

on Nov. 22, 1963, indicates that most of the "new revelations" are simply new interpretations of old stories.

The commission, headed by the late Chief Justice Earl Warren, concluded that Oswald had acted alone when he shot Kennedy. Although that conclusion has been hotly debated ever since — and although the commission was responsible for some sins of omission — there has been no strong evidence over the years to disprove its report.

The Latest conspiracy theory surfaced two weeks ago and came from Willem Oltmans, a Dutch television reporter. According to Oltmans, he befriended a Soviet emigre geologist, George de Mohrenschildt, in Dallas a few years after Kennedy's assassination, and de Mohrenschildt eventually admitted that he had been part of a conspiracy to kill Kennedy that involved the late H. L. Hunt, the right-wing oil billionaire, Oswald and some others.

Oltmans also contended that the FBI and the CIA were somehow involved, and that at least one Cuban — whom he did not identify — had shot at Kennedy that day in Dallas.

Even before Oltmans appeared before a closed session of the House Assassinations Committee to tell his story under oath, one influential Committee investigator described the witness to colleagues as "full of ..."

But committee members, driven by dissension and under orders from congressional leaders to come up with something significant or go out of business March 31, were anxious to hear from Oltmans. And they were not terribly upset if selected bits of his eye-popping testimony were reported in newspapers.

Oltmans, who is writing a magazine article on his revelations, was glad to oblige fellow reporters with accounts of his testimony. The interview requests came thick and fast when de Mohrenschildt, who had only recently been released from a 51-day stay at a mental hospital, committed suicide last Tuesday at the Palm Beach, Fla., home of a daughter.

Subsequently, it was reported that de Mohrenschildt, 65, who came to this country in 1921 — saying

he was czarist nobility—had tried to commit suicide three previous times. He also had been in a mental hospital several times. Oltmans said that de Mohrenschildt had been writing a book and would, on occasion, admit that he had "made up" portions of the story.

De Mohrenschildt and his wife were interviewed by Warren Commission investigators because they were "close friends" of Oswald and Oswald's Soviet born wife, Marina. De Mohrenschildt proved a garrulous witness during his two days of interrogation. In its report, the commission quoted neighbors as describing him as "eccentric," and concluded that he knew nothing of the assassination.

Oltmans' story contained virtually every major conspiracy theory advanced over the last 13 years with one exception the involvement of the Mafia.

But the House committee itself was working on that angle and staged a media spectacular of a hearing, starring Santo Trafficante of Tampa, the Mafia boss of Florida. The hearing room was packed when Trafficante, asked whether he knew about a Kennedy assassination plot in advance, took the Fifth Amendment and refused to answer.

Afterward, the committee's chairman, Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), admitted that he had known in advance that the mob boss would not talk.

### Plots Against Castro

The Senate Intelligence Committee had previously uncovered several well-documented assassination plots, some involving Trafficante, but these had been against Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, not Kennedy. The Senate panel found that Trafficante, who knew his way around the Cuban underworld and had been a big gambling impresario in Havana until Castro came to power, had cooperated with the CIA on a series of abortive plots to kill Castro.

The House committee is not looking into plots against Castro, and despite the existence of an FBI memo that Trafficante once bragged about "getting" Kennedy, there is no serious evidence that he knew anything more than what newspapers reported on Kennedy's assassination.

The Trafficante episode appeared to prove that the committee, operating under its third chairman in six months, was and is under great pressure to come up with something, anything, to demonstrate to the House leadership that it deserves to stay in business.

In an executive session the day after Trafficante's heavily publicized appearance, Rep. Robert W. Edgar (D-Pa), a new member, suggested that "we try something like what we did yesterday ... I think we did more yesterday, even without getting factual information, simply because it focused again on the fact that we are looking into the issue." Edgar's assessment was right. The House voted last week to keep the committee alive for another two years.

But the panel, which drew the ire of the House originally when it came up with a proposed two-year budget of \$13 million, faces another test in a few weeks when it tries to win approval for a \$2.7 million budget for this year.

House leaders, including Rep. James J. Delaney (D-Queens), chairman of the

Rules Committee, had wanted to see evidence of some promising leads before voting to keep the panel. Just what evidence they saw is not clear, but here are some leads that Robert Tannenbaum, the former New York prosecutor who heads the Assassinations Committee's Kennedy task force, described to panel members in executive session last month:

• A nurse at Parkland Hospital in Dallas, where Kennedy was taken after he was shot, said that "four or five" bullet fragments were removed from Texas Gov. John B. Connally, who was wounded while riding with Kennedy. If the fragments weigh more than one bullet, it could mean that four, not three, bullets were fired at Kennedy and this could mean that more than one man was involved.

Thirteen years ago, the Warren Commission reported that "two or three" fragments were taken from Connally's wrist and that they could have flaked off from an almost-whole bullet that had passed through Connally's body and was found on a hospital stretch near the governor. In any event, Tannenbaum does not know where the fragments are.

continued

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• A Dallas woman who knew Jack Ruby has talked to committee investigators after having been missing for several years, Tanenbaum said. He did not identify her, but said that she had "found religion." This woman said that Ruby had introduced her to a man he identified as "Lee Harvey Oswald of the CIA" two weeks before the assassination. She conceded that she did not know what the initials CIA stood for.

Several persons told the Warren Commission that they had seen Oswald and Ruby together in Ruby's Dallas strip joint before the assassination. William Crowe, who was master of ceremonies at the club, said that there was "a possiblility" that Oswald has been there. But after extensive interviews, the commission concluded that the witnesses were "persons of erratic memory and dubious mental stability."

#### The King Probe

While the Kennedy assassination investigation is proceeding by fits and starts, the House committee's other investigation of the April 4, 1968 slaying of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., seems to be making more progress. James Earl Ray, convicted slayer of the civil rights leader, has agreed to cooperate with investigators.

The chances of finding a conspiracy in the King case look slightly more promising. The Justice Department said in a lengthy report in January that an investigation "failed to reveal any connection between any alleged conspirators and Jame Earl Ray," but conceded there were unanswered questions about the case.

The ost serious question is, Where did Ray, who had escaped from a Missouri prison, get the \$9,000 to \$10,000 he says he spent during his flight to Canada and Europe after King's murder in Memphis? Ray, who has been trying to overturn his murder conviction for the last eight years, told CBS-TV, which beat committee investigators to his Tennessee prison cell, that a mysterious Latin named Raoul had given him the money. He does not know where Raoul went, and neither does anyone else.

# Assassin Probe's 'Preview' Provides Little New Light

By George Lardner Jr.  
Washington Post Staff Writer

If the latest official report of the House Assassinations Committee could be labeled neatly, "Twice Told Tales" might do.

In preparation for last week's show-down vote continuing the congressional inquiry into the murders of President Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., the besieged 12-member committee decided to offer a public preview of its investigations thus far.

Most of the material in the 14-page status report was uncorroborated and had a vaguely familiar ring.

The report raises serious questions about both the accuracy of the committee's work and its inclination to present twice-told tales as though they were fresh leads too sensitive to disclose with any particularity.

After announcing that the 67-member staff is assiduously pursuing "new leads" in the Kennedy assassination, for instance, the report confides:

"Recently, an FBI informant advised the Committee that he had seen an FBI agent and Lee Harvey Oswald meeting together on numerous occasions in various New Orleans bars. The informant states that he had previously denied seeing Oswald and the agent together because he was threatened by the agent. The agent has denied the informant's charge."

In this case, the committee appears to be just getting around to what mil-

## News Analysis

lions of Americans saw and heard on Nov. 26, 1975, on a CBS-TV program entitled "The American Assassins."

While the cameras rolled, New Orleans bar operator Orest Pena openly asserted, and FBI Agent Warren DeBrueys openly denied, that DeBrueys and Oswald often met in the city's French Quarter, especially at a Greek restaurant.

Pena's story had changed quite a bit from his Warren Commission testimony that he had seen Oswald in the company of a Latin-looking man in August of 1963 at Pena's own Habana Bar and Lounge, where Oswald distinguished himself first by ordering lemonade and later by getting sick.

Pena's CBS appearance is dismissed with a vulgarity by Harold Weisberg, who has written a series of books on the Kennedy and King assassinations and who has become an outspoken critic of the House inquiry.

"Orest's an old friend of mine," Weisberg adds. "Everybody keeps asking him crazy questions leading to a whole set of confabulations. But I don't think he thinks he's making anything up. He's just lost in all of this. God knows who's been telling him what."

Item—According to the House report, "a witness who was an FBI security code clerk in the New Orleans office from 1961-'66 alleges that the FBI sent a teletype to all of its offices five days before the assassination, warning of a reported conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy on his proposed trip to Dallas on November 22-23 (1963) . . . The FBI has denied sending such a teletype."

This story originally popped to public attention on another television program back in 1968 featuring Jim Garrison, then the district attorney of New Orleans. According to an Oct. 21, 1975, hearing before the House Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights, moreover, the code clerk, William Walter, had not only added new twists to the story over the years, but also did poorly on a polygraph test provided under the auspices of the Dallas Times Herald in 1975 when the story surfaced again. (In the words of an FBI official, "there were indications of deception on the part of Mr. Walter" but "the results were inconclusive because of the limited number of questions . . .")

Item—The committee is "intensively" investigating an alleged conspiracy against King stemming "from a report by a now-deceased undercover informant of a southern police department. Immediately prior to Dr. King's death," the report states, "he told his superiors that he had recently overheard a conversation between members of two organizations in which it was said that when Dr. King returned to Memphis they would be forced to kill him."

The fact is that the informant, the late Willie Somerset, did not tell his superiors (Miami police and Dade County prosecuting authorities) about the purported conversation until nearly three weeks after King was killed.

Somerset did voice vague apprehensions about King before the murder to Miami Police Lt. Charles Sapp, as readers of last October's issue of Miami Magazine have known for months. But Somerset's "control" officer, former prosecutor Seymour Gelber, now a Dade County Circuit Court

judge, told The Washington Post in a telephone interview that he has strong reservations about Somerset's report because "the story was not given to us until after King's death. I think that makes it a lot different."

Item—Solemnly stating that its investigation has "uncovered other areas of possible assistance" to James Earl Ray (now serving a 99-year prison term for King's murder), the committee declares: "According to bank records, Ray's safety deposit box in Birmingham was closed by someone living in Baton Rouge. At the time of the closing, however, Ray was living in Los Angeles."

Weisberg, who has done investigative work for Ray and spoken with him, charges that "what they say here is false."

"The bank deposit box was closed by a letter from Ray postmarked Baton Rouge. The bank closed the box and threw the letter away. I think he wrote the letter in Los Angeles and mailed it in Baton Rouge on his way to New Orleans."

None of this should be taken to mean that there are not many questions to be answered if the House inquiry is to be conducted. But as George McMillan, author of a book about Ray called "The Making of an Assassin," puts it:

"I really don't think they should take things that have been cleared up and talk about them so provocatively when they should know better."

The itemization is far from complete. In one especially questionable sentence, the committee has an FBI ballistics expert testifying at Ray's guilty plea hearing (he didn't) about whether the fatal bullet (he said in an affidavit it was too distorted) came from the rifle "allegedly" purchased by Ray.

Declares James Lesar, Ray's erst while attorney who says he still represents him: "Of all the things that are not in dispute, it is that Ray pur-

used the rifle . . . They don't know the facts [of either assassination] yet. So they're not even in a position to judge the credibility of the people who come to them."

In still another dubious excursion, the committee has now labeled a man who not long ago emerged from a psychiatric ward, George de Mohrenschildt, as a "crucial witness" although he had just committed suicide. Neither the Assassinations Committee nor its staff ever interviewed the man, a White Russian who had befriended the Oswalds in Texas in 1962.

In fact, House investigators possess little more than a Dutch television film tape and one tape cassette "allegedly" containing a conversation between de Mohrenschildt and Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans.

In a spate of interviews since de Mohrenschildt's death Tuesday afternoon, Oltmans has been quoting him as saying he was a middleman between Texas oilmen and Oswald in a baroque kill-Kennedy conspiracy, which also seems to have included anti-Castro Cubans and a trucking firm executive.

Curiously, by Oltmans' account, de Mohrenschildt did not come up with the story until February—more than 13 years after the assassination but only a few weeks after his release Dec. 30 from the psychiatric unit of Parkland Memorial Hospital. And although Oltmans quoted de Mohrenschildt as saying Oswald took instructions from him, that is somewhat difficult to square with the fact that the de Mohrenschildts were in Haiti at the time of the Kennedy assassination and had been there for about five months. They told the Warren Commission they last saw the Oswalds in April of 1963 and, the commission found, "they never saw either of the Oswalds again."

Charges Weisberg: "There's not one thing they've come up with that has established relevance. They've been in business six months, they've had a staff of 73 people, and they can't even read accurately from other people's work. I have never seen a more total confession of bankruptcy."

However that may be, the committee is clearly following the "scenario" laid out at a secret March 17 meeting when its since-resigned chief counsel, Richard A. Sprague, warned the members that the potentially significant items compiled thus far were much "too raw and uncorroborated for us to be stating publicly."

Rep. Samuel L. Devine (R-Ohio) responded by suggesting that the committee might take some of the "literally hundreds of undeveloped leads" on hand and make them public in bowdlerized fashion.

That way, Devine suggested, the committee could "let people know that, 'My God, they are onto something that is new stuff' . . ."

According to one well-placed source, with Sprague gone the pressures to find a conspiracy are bound to increase. This source says Sprague, as an investigator, was actually "a moderating influence."



# Oswald Wrote Letter to Hunt?

From News Services

A Dallas newspaper said yesterday three handwriting experts have examined a controversial letter dated Nov. 8, 1963 — 14 days before President John F. Kennedy was assassinated — and addressed to a "Mr. Hunt" and concluded that the writer was Lee Harvey Oswald.

The terse note asking "Mr. Hunt" for "information concerning my position" was first disclosed Feb. 6 by the Dallas Morning News. The letter was forwarded to the FBI.

The handwriting analysts, commissioned by the News and certified by the International Graphoanalysis Society, said the writing compared to that of Oswald contained in the Warren Commission Report.

The note began, "Mr. Hunt. I would like information concerning my position. I am asking only for information. I am suggesting that we discuss the matter fully before any steps are taken by me or anyone else."

It was signed, "Thank You, Lee Harvey Oswald."

**OSWALD WAS IDENTIFIED** by the Warren Commission as the person who assassinated President Kennedy in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963. The commission said it found that Oswald acted alone in the assassination.

A Dutch journalist, Willem Oltmans, who testified before the House Assassinations Committee here Friday, quoted George de Mohrenschildt, a friend of Oswald who committed suicide earlier this week, as saying de Mohrenschildt was the

*Dear Mr Hunt.*

*I would like information  
concerning my position.*

*Thank You.*

*Lee Harvey Oswald*

middleman between the late oil billionaire H.L. Hunt and Oswald in a plan to kill Kennedy.

Spokesmen for the Hunt family have denied the accusations.

The Morning News said it had obtained the note from retired newspaper editor Penn Jones of Midlothian, Tex. Jones, who has privately investigated the assassination for years, said he had received the note through the mail in August 1975 from an anonymous person in Mexico City. He said the sender told him that he had given a copy of the letter to FBI Director Clarence Kelley in late 1974.

An FBI spokesman has said the bureau knows nothing about the delivery of the letter to Kelley, but that the bureau is still attempting to determine the authenticity of the note.

The Dallas newspaper said the handwriting experts were commissioned by the News and their conclusion was that it is "the authentic writing of Lee Harvey Oswald and was written by him."

**JONES SAID** FBI agents came to his home last week with portable photographic equipment to photograph his copy of the letter.

The News identified the handwriting experts as Mary C. Harrison of Richardson, Tex., Mary I. Duncan of Toronto, Canada, and Allan R. Keown of El Paso, Tex. The newspaper said all three are certified with the International Graphoanalysis Society and were alerted to watch specifically for any signs of forgery.

"We have made a careful examination and comparison of all the writing and find that it compares," the three said in a signed statement, the newspaper reported.

A spokesman for the Hunt estate issued a statement saying that reports that Hunt had something to do with the assassination were "totally false." A spokesman for Hunt Oil Co. denied that Hunt "ever knew, ever communicated with or ever received communication from Lee Harvey Oswald."

Meanwhile, Rep. Richardson Preyer, D-N.C., a leading member of the House Assassinations Committee, said he needs time to assess the credibility of testimony by Oltmans that de Mohrenschildt, a Russian-born geologist, claimed to be part of a conspiracy to kill Kennedy.

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continued



**PREYER, CHAIRMAN** of the subcommittee on the Kennedy assassination, would not say whether he believed the story the Dutch journalist gave behind closed doors for three hours Friday.

"Ask me that question again in a few months," said Preyer. "Mr. Oltmans was very specific on some things which can be corroborated but not as clear on others."

De Mohrenschildt's only daughter, Alexandra, said yesterday her father was "mentally and physically afraid" of Oltmans but did not fear the possibility of testifying before the House Assassinations Committee.

The 33-year-old woman held an interview in West Palm Beach with a group of newsmen, including representatives of WTVJ, Miami, and WFAA, Dallas, to counter Oltmans' statements.

"It's completely contrary to anything I ever heard my father say," she said of Oltmans' statements. "That my father had anything to do with the assassination of President Kennedy, that my father had anything to do with masterminding the assassination, is completely contrary to anything he said to me. Nothing remotely like that."

"He was just terrified" of Oltmans, however. "He felt he had been drugged in Amsterdam (when he did a television interview with Oltmans).

The Warren Commission took 100 pages of sworn testimony from de Mohrenschildt and 40 pages from his wife.

De Mohrenschildt, who was born in the Soviet Union and taught French at Bishop College in Dallas, was found dead in Palm Beach, Fla., last Tuesday, hours after a committee investigator tried to contact him.

14-00000

## Was He Responsible for Oswald's Act?

# The de Mohrenschildt-JFK Enigma

By Jeremiah O'Leary  
Washington Star Staff Writer

When George de Mohrenschildt disappeared in Brussels last March 7, he could have been tabbed either as just another fruitcake or someone out to make a buck on his acquaintance with Lee and Marina Oswald.

Or, just possibly, he could have been the man responsible for Oswald's behavior when President John F. Kennedy was shot to death in 1963 as he reportedly acknowledged in the manuscript of a book he had written.

But today, this much is certain about the 65-year-old Russian-born emigre:

- He is now in a Palm Beach, Fla., morgue, dead of an apparently self-inflicted shotgun wound.
- He was of sufficient interest to the House Committee on Assassinations that one of its investigators was in Palm Beach on Tuesday seeking to interview him when the ostensible suicide occurred.
- He is once again of considerable interest to the FBI, which devoted a major portion of Book 9 of the Warren Commission Report to de Mohrenschildt.

If de Mohrenschildt had a motive for committing suicide in his daughter's house, it is not known. Nor is it known why he was negotiating with Dutch publishers to sell his book about the Kennedy case when he disappeared in the Belgian capital shortly after meeting a Soviet diplomat.

He has been categorized as either an opportunist or as a man with a history of mental illness who was subject to wild changes of mood. But he cannot be ignored so long as the House investigative panel and the FBI are genuinely interested in finding out what role, if any, de Mohrenschildt played in the killing of President Kennedy in a Dallas motorcade on Nov. 22, 1963.

IT HAS LONG BEEN known that de Mohrenschildt, as part of the Dallas Russian-speaking community, was close to Lee Harvey Oswald and his Russian wife, Marina. The FBI says it checked him out every way from Sunday in the days and weeks after the presidential assassination. He was a witness before the Warren Commission, and what he said then can be found in 118 pages of that bulky report.

What is not known is what his motive was for writing the manuscript of a book entitled "I'm a Patsy, I'm a Patsy" and claiming that it is the story of how he was responsible for Oswald's assassination of Kennedy.

The mysterious recent history of de Mohrenschildt is largely attributa-

ble to a Dutch journalist named Willem Oltmans, who was interviewed by The Washington Star on March 18. Oltmans, who had been cultivating de Mohrenschildt as a news source and a friend for the past 10 years, is the man who told the House Assassinations Committee earlier this month about de Mohrenschildt's decision to tell his version of the Kennedy murder.

It was this appearance before committee staffers by Oltmans on March 11 that prompted the panel to send investigator Gaetan Fonzi to Palm Beach last Monday to try to question de Mohrenschildt. According to Oltmans, this is the erratic story of the White Russian college professor's last weeks of life:

Oltmans had known de Mohrenschildt for a decade in periodic visits to Dallas. He knew de Mohrenschildt to be an emigre Russian count, a petroleum engineer, a teacher of French at Bishop College and as a close friend of the Oswalds. Oltmans fell into the habit of visiting George and Jeanne de Mohrenschildt two or three times a year.

IN JANUARY 1976, de Mohrenschildt wrote Oltmans that he was preparing a book and sent several pages to the Dutch reporter for consideration. By June the book was completed, but Jeanne de Mohrenschildt told Oltmans she was upset when she read it. She told her husband he would go to jail if it was published because it was about the assassination of Kennedy and mentioned names of CIA and FBI agents throughout.

Last November, Oltmans went to Dallas and called de Mohrenschildt, only to be told by his wife that he had been in a hospital for several months. Oltmans said he called de Mohrenschildt's lawyer, Pat S. Russell, and was told de Mohrenschildt was in a mental hospital suffering from a persecution complex and undergoing heavy shock treatments.

According to Oltmans, the manuscript of the book is in custody of Russell. The Dallas attorney could not be reached last night for comment, but Oltmans said he was told Russell has the book in his office files. He reportedly has not read the manuscript.

Oltmans went back to Dallas on Feb. 23, 1977, and had lunch with de Mohrenschildt, who was now back at work. The journalist said this exchange took place in the Bishop College library:

De Mohrenschildt: "How would it hit the media if I came out and said I felt responsible for Oswald's behavior?"

Oltmans: "You mean what Oswald did? Shot or not shot, he was involved in the shooting. You have links here to the shooting of the president of the United States."

DE MOHRENSCHILDT: "I realize that and I don't want to incriminate myself directly. But I am convinced that what Oswald finally set up we completely agreed upon."

Oltmans: "But you were in Haiti on the day of the assassination."

De Mohrenschildt: "Yes."

Oltmans said de Mohrenschildt "was a guy very cleverly saying 'I knew exactly what Oswald was going to do and I have proof of it.'"

Oltmans said he asked de Mohrenschildt if he was ready to make a statement. He said the professor replied, "Yes, but never in America. I am being followed. I find my house all the time searched. So I am scared to death. I first must get out of the country."

Oltmans said he quickly called his Dutch television superior and was told to bring de Mohrenschildt to Holland. As Oltmans tells it, de Mohrenschildt had several changes of mind but finally said he was ready to go. Oltmans said they drove to Houston, left de Mohrenschildt's car there with a man named David Russell and eventually arrived in Amsterdam on March 3. There they began a round of talks with Dutch television and publishing executives, meanwhile checking with attorney Russell in Dallas to be sure the manuscript was still in his office.

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ON MARCH 5, OLTMANS and de Mohrenschildt drove to Brussels to meet a friend of the Dutch reporter, a Soviet diplomat he identified only as "Kuznetzov." The three men chatted at the newstand of the Hotel Metropole and de Mohrenschildt said he would go for a walk before lunch. "He never returned from that walk," said Oltmans.

On March 7, back in Holland, de Mohrenschildt's disappearance was reported to the U.S. Embassy in the Hague. Oltmans said the official receiving the report was Jacob Gillespie, a press officer at the embassy. There is no record that the missing report was relayed to the State Department in Washington.

Oltmans said he wasn't worried. He got a call from a man in Brussels who identified himself as "Genta," and he said de Mohrenschildt had departed for the United States. But Oltmans said de Mohrenschildt left behind all his belongings except his briefcase — his pipe, his luggage and his dirty raincoat. De Mohrenschildt took Oltmans' clean new raincoat in stead. Oltmans said he put all of de Mohrenschildt's possessions in an Amsterdam bank and sent the receipt to attorney Russell in Dallas.

Yesterday in Palm Springs, Fla., a police official said authorities there were also holding "certain personal papers" belonging to de Mohrenschildt, United Press International reported. The official declined to say if those papers were related to the Kennedy assassination.

In early March, Oltmans came to Washington, called the committee about the whole affair and told essentially this story to deputy Counsel Robert Tanenbaum and three other investigators. Oltmans' view of de Mohrenschildt's role in the assassination, if there is one, is that de Mohrenschildt didn't figure in the slaying but "that together they cooked it up."

De Mohrenschildt, according to Oltmans, could have been kidnaped, or have had another "crazy attack" or have gone to the Soviet Union. None of those things happened, but Oltmans did have a clue to the way de Mohrenschildt died even before the man shot himself.

Oltmans said "He told me in Europe: 'Look, I'll be discharged at Bishop College in June. I'm 65. My wife ran away. (They reportedly are now divorced.) I'm at the end of the line.' And one day he came into my

room and said, 'Let's face it. I only made up the story (about Oswald) because everybody makes a million dollars off the Kennedy assassination, and I haven't made anything. So now it's my time. So now you and I know that.'"

THE FBI SAYS IT does not know what to make of de Mohrenschildt's strange journey or of his apparent suicide. The Warren Commission concluded that he did not have any connection with Kennedy's death even though he knew the Oswalds well and probably helped them with financial and family problems. Even so, the House committee wanted to question de Mohrenschildt, and Fonzi just missed him.

He went to the house where de Mohrenschildt was staying at noon Tuesday and was told to return that evening because the man was not home. In the afternoon, de Mohrenschildt apparently put a shotgun in his mouth and pulled the trigger.

No note was found. If there is an answer to George de Mohrenschildt's troubled life, it may lie in the book he has written and that lawyer Russell purportedly has filed away in Dallas: "I'm a Patsy, I'm a Patsy."

# Figure in JFK Probe Found Dead, a 'Suicide'

From News Services

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PALM BEACH, Fla. — A Russian-born petroleum geologist and language professor, described as "intimately involved" with Lee Harvey Oswald and a "crucial witness" in the congressional investigation of the Kennedy assassination, was found dead yesterday in an apparent suicide.

Palm Beach County Sheriff Richard Wille identified the victim as George de Mohrenschildt, 65, a professor of French at Dallas' Bishop College.

Wille said de Mohrenschildt, a guest at the historic oceanfront mansion in suburban Manalapan, Fla., of Mrs. Charles Tilton III, apparently placed the muzzle of a 20 gauge shotgun to his mouth and pulled the trigger.

The sheriff said de Mohrenschildt had vanished from Dallas shortly after a Dutch newspaper report about three weeks ago claimed he had prior knowledge of the assassination.

De Mohrenschildt was traced by a House Assassinations Committee investigator to the Florida address, the sheriff said, and he returned to the Tilton home about 2:45 p.m. yesterday to learn that the investigator, believed to be Gaeton J. Fonzi, had been trying to reach him.

**THE DRAMATIC** development yesterday, together with sudden support of a continued investigation by Dr. Martin Luther King Sr., may serve to win the committee a new lease on life. Under continuous attack, the assassinations panel will go out of business at midnight tonight unless the full House votes an extension.

Informed late last night of the death, Rep. Richardson Preyer, D-N.C., a key member of the committee, said, "He was a crucial witness for us, based on the new information he had. He was intimately involved with Oswald."

When the Warren Commission issued its report in 1964, concluding that President Kennedy was killed by Oswald acting alone, it said it had conducted an extensive investigation into de Mohrenschildt and his wife, Jeanne, because they had known the Oswalds through mutual Russian-speaking friends in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The commission con-



George de Mohrenschildt, shown with his wife in an earlier photo.

cluded that there was no evidence linking them to the tragic event in Dallas.

In his account quoting de Mohrenschildt as saying he had prior knowledge of the Kennedy assassination, Dutch journalist William Oltmans reported, "He (de Mohrenschildt) asked me 'How do you think the media would react if I came out and said I feel responsible for Oswald's behavior?'"

**AFTER VANISHING** from Dallas, De Mohrenschildt showed up in Oltmans' office in Holland. Then he disappeared again and was traced by government investigators from Brussels to Florida.

Sheriff Wille said only a maid and the Tilton family chauffeur were at home at the time and the shooting went undiscovered until the body was found by de Mohrenschildt's daughter in a second floor drawing room. Both had been guests at the Tilton home for about a week.

The sheriff said the call to the home was believed to have been placed from Miami by House investigator Fonzi.

About an hour later, Wille said, de Mohrenschildt apparently shot himself. "We're 99 percent certain he killed himself," the sheriff said.

Wille and Palm Beach State Atty. David Bludworth questioned witnesses about the shooting until shortly before midnight.

Among the witnesses quizzed was free lance writer Ed Epstein, who had told the West Palm Beach Post Monday night that he had been interviewing de Mohrenschildt in connection with a book he was doing about Lee Harvey Oswald.

**AFTER HIS** questioning last night, Epstein said, "I don't mean to be evasive but the police told me not to talk about de Mohrenschildt's death to anybody."

The Tilton home remained sealed off by sheriff's deputies last night.

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According to the Warren Commission report, de Mohrenschildt was born in the Ukraine in 1911 and fled Russia in 1921 following the civil disorders that broke out after the Bolshevik revolution.

He became an American citizen in 1949, having earlier received a graduate degree from the University of Texas in petroleum geology and petroleum engineering.

In 1960, the report states, he traveled for eight months through Mexico and Panama over primitive jungle trails, and by happenstance he and his wife were in Guatemala City when the Bay of Pigs invasion was launched. He prepared a lengthy film clip and a complete written log on the trip and a report was made to the U.S. government, the commission reported.

De Mohrenschildt death was third involving witnesses or potential witness before congressional panels investigating assassinations.

Underworld figure Sam Giancana was murdered before, and John Roselli was killed after, testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee investigating allegations that the assassination of Kennedy was in retaliation for CIA efforts to assassinate Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.